



Catalyzing Creativity Grants Program Guidelines

About Creative Greensboro: Creative Greensboro, the City's office for arts and culture, provides support for, ensures access to, and drives awareness of Greensboro's creative community. Through a range of programs, services, and partnerships, we support the development of a vibrant city.

Purpose of Catalyzing Creativity Grants: This program will provide financial support for creative programming initiatives by nonprofit organizations and creative individuals with a specific intent of engagement with historically marginalized communities. Funded partners and their proposed project will demonstrate a sustained focus on engagement with communities of color, low-income communities, and/or people with disabilities.

Catalyzing Creativity Grants are designed in response to Strategy 2.2 of the Creative Greensboro Cultural Arts Master Plan – "Identify culturally specific and emerging arts and cultural organizations and develop an initiative supporting their organizational growth, resilience, and programmatic reach."

Creative Programming, Defined: Creative Greensboro seeks to support programming that is designed for public engagement including archeology/natural sciences, architecture, film/photography, history/natural history, literature, performing arts (ballet, dance, music, theater), technology, and visual arts (ceramics, fiber arts, glass, painting, sculpture). Other forms of creative programming may also be considered eligible, especially those occurring in a performing arts center, theater, concert hall, museum, and other property, improvements, or facilities used in connection therewith.

Request Amounts: Applicants may request up to 50% of their total project expenses, up to \$10,000. Project expenses may include the value of goods and services offered to the project through in-kind contributions. The grant request amount may not exceed the amount of actual cash expenses anticipated for the project.

Grant Amounts: During Fiscal Year 2020-2021, \$60,000 will be available to award through the Catalyzing Creative Grant program. Grant awards will vary, determined by a formula that considers the eligible request amount and panel review outcomes. Requests may be partially funded or declined. The maximum award to an applicant will be \$10,000. Catalyzing Creativity Grants are restricted to support of the activities outlined in the approved application and are intended to supplement other support, both earned and contributed, generated by the funded partner.



Freedom of creative expression: Creative Greensboro promotes excellence and access in the creation, experience and active support of creative programming for all of the people of our community. Creative Greensboro supports the freedom of audiences to experience a full range of expression and to respond to creative works. Creative Greensboro supports the creative community's right to choose freely the subject matter of their individual works. It is not the role of Creative Greensboro to make program or program content decisions for grant recipients. Receipt of funding from Creative Greensboro is not a specific endorsement by Creative Greensboro of individual programs or program content.

Timeline

- Proposed projects must occur between January 1, 2021 and June 30, 2021.
- Applications must be received [via the online application](#) by: October 30, 2020 at 5:00pm.
- The Panel Review will occur on or before Friday, December 4, 2020.
- Award announcements will be made on or before Friday, December 18, 2020.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a Catalyzing Creativity Grant, applicants must:

- At the time of application, be either an individual with a primary residence in Guilford County or a Guilford County-based, non-profit, tax-exempt organization that is in good standing with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). (Individuals may apply through a Guilford County based fiscal sponsor organization – see FAQs).
- Propose a project dedicated principally to creative programming, as defined previously in the program guidelines.
- Propose a project that will occur primarily within the city limits of Greensboro, NC.
- Propose a project that will begin no earlier than January 1, 2021 and be completed no later than June 30, 2021.
- Submit only one request to the program per funding cycle.

Restrictions

The following types of organizations, applicants, and projects are not eligible to apply or receive support through the Catalyzing Creativity Grant:

- Organizations that have received cash support and/or in-kind contributions through the City of Greensboro valued at \$5,000 or more within 12 months of the date of application
- City of Greensboro employees
- Organizations that focus on capacity building, technical assistance or advocacy and do not offer direct creative programming
- "Friends of..." organizations whose primary purpose is to support government agencies, nonprofits or other initiatives
- Colleges, universities, public broadcasting stations
- Organizations that operate as a legal subsidiary of a non-qualifying organization
- Projects that are religious or political in nature or that involve work with preK-12 children during the school day



Catalyzing Creativity Grants are intended to support public programming presented by funded partners. Grant funds may not be used for:

- Cash reserves, trust or endowment funds, deficit reduction/elimination, penalties or litigation costs.
- Capital improvements, construction or renovation projects, purchase of real property.
- Re-granting activities or prize money.
- Private functions, benefits, lobbying activities or any non-public activities that are solely for the purpose of fundraising.
- Entertainment costs (costs of amusement, diversion, social activities, ceremonials, and costs relating thereto, such as meals, lodging, rentals, transportation and gratuities) or costs for food or beverages for parties/receptions
- Acrobatics, aerobic dance, beauty pageants, clowning, cosmetology, essay contests, fashion shows, juggling, magic shows, martial arts, modeling, quiz bowls, and travel presentations.

A note about murals or other public art projects: Though not the sole focus of this grant, the Catalyzing Creativity program accepts proposals for funding to support public art projects, provided they meet the stated criteria. For the purpose of this grant program, Creative Greensboro will only consider support of public art/mural projects that are proposed for installation on publicly visible but privately owned property.

Public art gives meaning to spaces by evoking memories, making connections between cultures, exploring differences through illuminating them, telling stories, and provoking thought and discussion. Public art is not a tool for PR or marketing or solely beautification or decoration. Creative Greensboro believes that much of the value of public art lies in the process. Therefore, requests for funding to support public art projects must:

- Define the community that will engage in and be the beneficiary of the project.
- Display evidence that the community will be involved in the identification of the project purpose and concept.
- Display evidence that the community will be involved in the artist selection process.
- Display evidence that the selected artist will engage the community in the development and/or fabrication of the work.

Requests for support of murals or other public art projects that do not follow this process will be considered ineligible. Additionally, please note that a common obstacle faced by these type projects is securing a suitable location for the work. If funding is recommended for a public art project, the applicant must submit a Letter of Agreement with the relevant property owner prior to being issued a grant agreement. The City of Greensboro does not accept any ongoing maintenance responsibility for funded projects.



Funding Criteria

The following funding criteria are the principles that anchor the Catalyzing Creativity Grants program: Project Design, Cultural Significance, and Ability to Complete Project.

Project Design (30 points): *Catalyzing Creativity Grants seek to support creative projects and programs that are well developed in concept and led by creative individuals with appropriate experience.*

Applicants will be asked to: describe the proposed project in detail and explain how the proposed project aligns with goals strategies previously adopted by the organization or their work as a creative individual.

Panelists will evaluate extent to which the applicant: proposes a well-planned project with clear outputs and that allows for purposeful relationships among stakeholders and participants.

Weak	Fair	Good	Strong	Exceptional
0-5	6-9	10-11	12-13	14-15

Applicants will be asked to: provide brief bios of the key staff/creative contributors and include relevant experience and qualifications.

Panelists will evaluate extent to which the applicant: has appropriate project and creative leadership with experience and relevance to intended audience/community.

Weak	Fair	Good	Strong	Exceptional
0-5	6-9	10-11	12-13	14-15

Cultural Significance (40 points): *Catalyzing Creativity Grants seek to support creative projects and programs that are thoughtfully and respectfully designed for engagement with communities who are frequently marginalized; communities of color, low-income communities, and/or people with disabilities.*

Applicants will be asked to: highlight their activities over the last two years engaging with communities of color, low-income communities, and/or people with disabilities.

Panelists will evaluate extent to which the applicant: is deeply rooted in and positioned for thoughtful and respectful engagement with historically marginalized communities.

Weak	Fair	Good	Strong	Exceptional
0-7	8-11	12-14	15-17	18-20

Applicants will be asked to: describe how the proposed project has been conceived of and designed with the realities and experiences of the intended audience/communities in mind.

Panelists will evaluate extent to which the applicant: demonstrates that the project has been thoughtfully designed and will allow for respectful engagement with the intended communities.

Weak	Fair	Good	Strong	Exceptional
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0-7	8-11	12-14	15-17	18-20
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Ability to Complete Project (30 points): *Catalyzing Creativity Grants seek to support creative projects and programs that include appropriate partnerships, realistic expense and revenue budgeting, goals and measurements for success, and are reflective of past successful work offered by the applicant.*

Applicants will be asked to: describe how volunteers and other stakeholders will contribute toward success of the project, provide a [project budget \(using the template provided\)](#) that outlines anticipated expenses and revenue necessary to support the project, and provide relevant work samples from past projects.

Panelists will evaluate extent to which the applicant: demonstrates appropriate capacity to complete the project.

Weak	Fair	Good	Strong	Exceptional
0-5	6-9	10-11	12-13	14-15

Applicants will be asked to: describe how the project will create benefit for both the applicant and the intended audience and how this benefit will be measured.

Panelists will evaluate extent to which the applicant: understands the benefits of the proposed project and plans for appropriate measures.

Weak	Fair	Good	Strong	Exceptional
0-5	6-9	10-11	12-13	14-15

A word about the scoring descriptions: Weak, Fair, Good, Strong and Exceptional

Exceptional: Overwhelming evidence throughout the application that criterion is fully met.

Strong: Clear evidence throughout the application that criterion is met.

Good: Sufficient evidence throughout the application that criterion is met. Generally, responses are clear with limited inconsistency.

Fair: Limited evidence throughout the application that criterion is met. Frequently, responses are unclear or do not address criterion.

Weak: Insufficient evidence throughout the application that criterion is met. Generally, responses are unclear or do not address criterion.



Application Review

Creative Greensboro staff will receive applications and perform an initial review to verify eligibility and completeness. Applicants meeting the baseline eligibility criteria with a complete application will be advanced to the Panel Review.

A panel of non-local arts and culture professionals who are free of conflict will review all eligible applications in a transparent panel review process. Panelists are chosen to represent a cross-section of professionals qualified to provide expert knowledge of specific arts or cultural disciplines, as well as for their management experience, professional knowledge of the sector and prior panel experience.

Creative Greensboro staff will provide the applications to panelists approximately four weeks prior to the panel review meeting in order to allow panelists sufficient time for their evaluation.

Applicants will be invited to attend the panel review meeting as observers and will be advised on the approximate time during which their application will be reviewed. Applicants are encouraged to attend the entirety of the meeting and to invite staff and board members.

During the panel review meeting, panelists will discuss and score each application individually. Creative Greensboro staff will serve as the moderator for the panel review meeting but will not offer any scores or opinions. Panelists will offer specific remarks (affirmative and constructive) relative to each applicant's response to the 3 Funding Criteria (Cultural Significance, Project Design, and Ability to Complete Project). At the conclusion of remarks for each applicant, panelists will submit a score for each criteria. The scores will be totaled and averaged and a composite score for the applicant announced publicly.

Applicants will not address the panel during the review meeting. However, if substantive and inaccurate remarks are made by panelists that might influence scoring, applicants will be able to submit a correction request. Correction requests will be reviewed by Creative Greensboro staff and, if approved, shared with the panel during the public review meeting. Correction requests will only be approved and shared if a panelist's misstatement or misrepresentation can be addressed with information within the submitted application. Panelists will be afforded the opportunity to revise their scores for any applicant who submits an approved correction request. Correction requests will not be accepted after the conclusion of the review meeting.



Funding Decisions

This is an open and competitive process, and prior support through the City of Greensboro does not guarantee future support.

The composite score from the panel review meeting and the eligible request amount for each applicant will be incorporated into a formulaic decision making tool to determine grant awards. While the exact minimum score required to receive funding will depend on the total applicant pool and available funds, it is expected that applicants who receive a composite score of less than 65 will not be considered for support.

For Fiscal Year 2020-2021, \$60,000 is available for distribution through the Catalyzing Creativity Grants program. The maximum grant award will be \$10,000. All approved grants may not be funded at the requested amount. Requests may be partially funded or declined.

Funded Partner Requirements

In an effort to demonstrate the impact of Catalyzing Creativity Grants and advance Creative Greensboro goals, funded partners will be required to:

- Return a signed grant agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the award.
- Submit scheduled reporting that demonstrates participation numbers and the physical locations where creative programming occurs.
- Acknowledge Creative Greensboro and the City of Greensboro on all organizational websites, social media, and printed materials related to the funded project(s).
- Post all funded public facing programs to relevant Creative Greensboro marketing channels no fewer than 30 days prior to the start date of each program.

Applicant Assistance

In an ongoing effort to assist applicants with the development of requests for funding, applicants are encouraged to view a webinar recorded by Creative Greensboro staff that covers the program purpose, eligibility, review criteria, and the elements of the application. [View the webinar at this link.](#)

Because some of the questions and attachments for the application will require your thoughtful response, you may find it helpful to use this [Application Worksheet](#) to formulate and edit your responses and then visit the online form where you can copy and paste your responses and upload your attachments.

Creative Greensboro staff are available for direct consultation to assist applicants with the development of their proposal. We are unable to provide multiple consultations to any one applicant and will not reply to requests for assistance received within 72 hours of the application deadline. Contact a member of the Creative Greensboro staff at 336-373-4371.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is a Fiscal Sponsor?

A: The Fiscal Sponsor (or Fiscal Agent) is an organization that agrees to accept and be responsible for grant monies on your behalf. The Fiscal Sponsor must be a Guilford County-based non-profit organization. Applicants that do not have tax-exempt status may apply through a Fiscal Sponsor. All grant payments will be made payable to the Fiscal Sponsor organization. It is the applicant's responsibility to identify a Fiscal Sponsor and to outline specific responsibilities of each party. Individuals with a primary residence in Guilford County may apply directly to Creative Greensboro, or through a Fiscal Sponsor.

Q: What is in-kind support?

A: In-kind support is defined as anything provided to the project (space rental, supplies, printed materials, volunteer time, etc.) at no cost to the applicant. All contributions should be given an appropriate cash value. Commonly used in-kind support includes volunteer time. Estimations for volunteer time should be calculated at the rate of \$21.36/hour.

Q: How will I receive funding, if awarded?

A: Funding schedules will vary, depending on both the scope and duration of the project proposal. Submission of initial paperwork will be required for a first installment, and final report submission will be required before final payments are made. Most often, funding is distributed with 50% up front and 50% when the final report is completed.

Q: Other than the online application information, can I submit any additional support material?

A: All required and supporting documents and materials must be submitted using our online application system. In some cases, this may require the use of a scanner. The application allows for the submission of support material as part of the "Ability to Complete Project" criteria responses.

Q: Will the Catalyzing Creativity Grants program be offered again in the future?

A: This is a first-time and pilot initiative of Creative Greensboro. Future opportunities for support will be based on the FY2021-22 Budget and in accordance with goals and strategies articulated in the Creative Greensboro Plan.

Q: I have more questions. Where can I get help?

A: Creative Greensboro staff is available to answer questions as you develop your application. Please contact us at 336-373-4371.

